

IRIS Document Coding Sheet

Document #

Asbestos-2

IRIS File Type

Circle one

Subtype

Circle one

IRIS Chemical Files

Decision files for chemicals
listed in IRIS

Toxicological Review

Peer review record

Key/difficult to find
materials

Other

Public Submission

Chemical nominations

New information

Comment

Other

RfD/RfC & CRAVE Files

CRAVE files prior to 1995

Nondecisional file reference
and supplemental data prior
to 1997

Other

Description

IRIS Summary for Asbestos

Author

Organization

NCEA

Date

7/1/93

Scan

Date

0371

Asbestos; CASRN 1332-21-4 (07/01/93)

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RAVE

Health risk assessment information on a chemical is included in IRIS only after a comprehensive review of chronic toxicity data by work groups composed of U.S. EPA scientists from several Program Offices. The summaries presented in Sections I and II represent a consensus reached in the review process. The other sections contain U.S. EPA information which is specific to a particular EPA program and has been subject to review procedures prescribed by that Program Office. The regulatory actions in Section IV may not be based on the most current risk assessment, or may be based on a current, but unreviewed, risk assessment, and may take into account factors other than health effects (e.g., treatment technology). When considering the use of regulatory action data for a particular situation, note the date of the regulatory action, the date of the most recent risk assessment relating to that action, and whether technological factors were considered. Background information and explanations of the methods used to derive the values given in IRIS are provided in the five Background Documents in Service Code 5, which correspond to Sections I through V of the chemical files.

STATUS OF DATA FOR Asbestos

File On-Line 09/26/88

Category (section)	Status	Last Revised
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Oral RfD Assessment (I.A.)	no data	
Inhalation RfC Assessment (I.B.)	no data	
Carcinogenicity Assessment (II.)	on-line	07/01/93
Drinking Water Health Advisories (III.A.)	no data	
U.S. EPA Regulatory Actions (IV.)	on-line	01/01/92
Supplementary Data (V.)	no data	

I. CHRONIC HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENTS FOR NONCARCINOGENIC EFFECTSI.A. REFERENCE DOSE FOR CHRONIC ORAL EXPOSURE (RfD)

Substance Name -- Asbestos

CASRN -- 1332-21-4

Not available at this time.

I.B. REFERENCE CONCENTRATION FOR CHRONIC INHALATION EXPOSURE (RFC)

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4

Not available at this time.

II. CARCINOGENICITY ASSESSMENT FOR LIFETIME EXPOSURE

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4
Last Revised -- 07/01/93

Section II provides information on three aspects of the carcinogenic risk assessment for the agent in question; the U.S. EPA classification, and quantitative estimates of risk from oral exposure and from inhalation exposure. The classification reflects a weight-of-evidence judgment of the likelihood that the agent is a human carcinogen. The quantitative risk estimates are presented in three ways. The slope factor is the result of application of a low-dose extrapolation procedure and is presented as the risk per (mg/kg)/day. The unit risk is the quantitative estimate in terms of either risk per ug/L drinking water or risk per ug/cu.m air breathed. The third form in which risk is presented is a drinking water or air concentration providing cancer risks of 1 in 10,000, 1 in 100,000 or 1 in 1,000,000. Background Document 2 (Service Code 5) provides details on the rationale and methods used to derive the carcinogenicity values found in IRIS. Users are referred to Section I for information on long-term toxic effects other than carcinogenicity.

NOTE: The carcinogen assessment summary for asbestos may change in the near future pending the outcome of a further review now being conducted by the CRAVE Work Group.

II.A. EVIDENCE FOR CLASSIFICATION AS TO HUMAN CARCINOGENICITY

II.A.1. WEIGHT-OF-EVIDENCE CLASSIFICATION

Classification -- A; human carcinogen

Basis -- Observation of increased mortality and incidence of lung cancer, mesotheliomas and gastrointestinal cancer in occupationally exposed workers are consistent across investigators and study populations. Animal studies by inhalation in two strains of rats showed similar findings for lung cancer and mesotheliomas. Animal evidence for carcinogenicity via ingestion is limited (male rats fed intermediate-range chrysotile fibers; i.e., >10 um length, developed benign polyps), and epidemiologic data in this regard are

inadequate.

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II.A.2. HUMAN CARCINOGENICITY DATA

Sufficient. Numerous epidemiologic studies have reported an increased incidence of deaths due to cancer, primarily lung cancer and mesotheliomas associated with exposure to inhaled asbestos. Among 170 asbestos insulation workers in North Ireland followed for up to 26 years, an increased incidence of death was seen due to all cancers (SMR=390), cancers of the lower respiratory tract and pleura (SMR=1760) (Elmes and Simpson, 1971) and mesothelioma (7 cases). Exposure was not quantified.

Selikoff (1976) reported 59 cases of lung cancer and 31 cases of mesothelioma among 1249 asbestos insulation workers followed prospectively for 11 years. Exposure was not quantified. A retrospective cohort mortality study (Selikoff et al., 1979) of 17,800 U.S. and Canadian asbestos insulation workers for a 10-year period using best available information (autopsy, surgical, clinical) reported an increased incidence of cancer at all sites (319.7 expected vs. 995 observed, SMR=311) and cancer of the lung (105.6 expected vs. 486 observed, SMR=460). A modest increase in deaths from gastrointestinal cancer was reported along with 175 deaths from mesothelioma (none expected). Years of exposure ranged from less than 10 to greater than or equal to 45. Levels of exposure were not quantified. In other epidemiologic studies, the increase for lung and pleural cancers has ranged from a low of 1.9 times the expected rate, in asbestos factory workers in England (Peto et al., 1977), to a high of 28 times the expected rate, in female asbestos textile workers in England (Newhouse et al., 1972). Other occupational studies have demonstrated asbestos exposure-related increases in lung cancer and mesothelioma in several industries including textile manufacturing, friction products manufacture, asbestos cement products, and in the mining and milling of asbestos. The studies used for the inhalation quantitative estimate of risk are listed in the table in Section II.C.2.

A case-control study (Newhouse and Thompson, 1965) of 83 patients with mesothelioma reported 52.6% had occupational exposure to asbestos or lived with asbestos workers compared with 11.8% of the controls. Of the remaining subjects, 30.6% of the mesothelioma cases lived within one-half mile of an asbestos factory compared with 7.6% of the controls.

The occurrence of pleural mesothelioma has been associated with the presence of asbestos fibers in water, fields and streets in a region of Turkey with very high environmental levels of naturally-occurring asbestos (Baris et al., 1979).

Kanarek et al. (1980) conducted an ecologic study of cancer deaths in 722 census tracts in the San Francisco Bay area, using cancer incidence data from the period of 1969-1971. Chrysotile asbestos concentrations in drinking water ranged from nondetectable to 3.6×10^7 fibers/L. Statistically significant dose-related trends were reported for lung and peritoneal cancer in white males and for gall bladder, pancreatic and peritoneal cancer in white females. Weaker correlations were reported between asbestos levels and female esophageal, pleural and kidney cancer, and stomach cancer in both sexes. In an extension of this study, Conforti et al. (1981) included cancer incidence data from the period of 1969-1974. Statistically significant positive associations were found between asbestos concentration and cancer of the digestive organs in white females, cancers of the digestive tract in

white males and esophageal, pancreatic and stomach cancer in both sexes. These associations appeared to be independent of socioeconomic status and occupational exposure to asbestos.

Marsh (1983) reviewed eight independent ecologic studies of asbestos in drinking water carried out in five geographic areas. It was concluded that even though one or more studies found an association between asbestos in water and cancer mortality (or incidence) due to neoplasms of various organs, no individual study or aggregation of studies exists that would establish risk levels from ingested asbestos. Factors confounding the results of these studies include the possible underestimates of occupational exposure to asbestos and the possible misclassification of peritoneal mesothelioma as GI cancer.

Polissar et al. (1984) carried out a case-control study which included better control for confounding variables at the individual level. The authors concluded that there was no convincing evidence for increased cancer risk from asbestos ingestion. At the present time, an important limitation of both the case-control and the ecologic studies is the short follow-up time relative to the long latent period for the appearance of tumors from asbestos exposure.

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II.A.3. ANIMAL CARCINOGENICITY DATA

Sufficient. There have been about 20 animal bioassays of asbestos. Gross et al. (1967) exposed 61 white male rats (strain not reported) to 86 mg chrysotile asbestos dust/cu.m for 30 hours/week for 16 months. Of the 41 animals that survived the exposure period, 10 had lung cancer. No lung cancer was observed in 25 controls.

Reeves (1976) exposed 60-77 rats/group for 4 hours/day, 4 days/week for 2 years to doses of 48.7-50.2 mg/cu.m crocidolite, 48.2-48.6 mg/cu.m amosite and 47.4-47.9 mg/cu.m chrysotile. A 5-14% incidence of lung cancer was observed among concentration groups and was concentration-dependent.

Wagner et al. (1974) exposed CD Wistar rats (19-52/group) to 9.7-14.7 mg/cu.m of several types of asbestos for 1 day to 24 months for 7 hours/day, 5 days/week. A duration-dependent increased incidence of lung carcinomas and mesotheliomas was seen for all types of asbestos after 3 months of exposure compared with controls.

F344 rats (88-250/group) were exposed to intermediate range chrysotile asbestos (1291×10^8 f/g) in drinking water by gavage to dams during lactation and then in diet throughout their lifetime (NTP, 1985). A statistically significant increase in incidence of benign epithelial neoplasms (adenomatous polyps in the large intestine) was observed in male rats compared with pooled controls of all NTP oral lifetime studies (3/524). In the same study, rats exposed to short range chrysotile asbestos (6081×10^9 f/g) showed no significant increase in tumor incidence.

Ward et al. (1980) administered 10 mg UICC amosite asbestos 3 times/week for 10 weeks by gavage to 50 male F344 rats. The animals were observed for an additional 78-79 weeks post-treatment. A total of 17 colon carcinomas were observed. This result was statistically significant compared with historical controls; no concurrent controls were maintained.

Syrian golden hamsters (126-253/group) were exposed to short and

intermediate range chrysotile asbestos at a concentration of 1% in the diet for the lifetime of the animals (NTP, 1983). An increased incidence of neoplasia of the adrenal cortex was observed in both males and females exposed to intermediate range fibers and in males exposed to short range fibers. This increase was statistically significant by comparison to pooled controls but not by comparison to concurrent controls. NTP suggested that the biologic importance of adrenal tumors in the absence of target organ (GI tract) neoplasia was questionable.

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__II.A.4. SUPPORTING DATA FOR CARCINOGENICITY

Sincock (1977) reported an increased number of chromosomes and chromosome breaks after passive inclusion of asbestos with CHO-K1 cells. Chamberlain and Tarmy (1977) reported asbestos not to be mutagenic for *E. coli* or *S. typhimurium*. A positive response was unlikely, however, since prokaryotic cells do not phagocytize particles as do eukaryotic cells.

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__II.B. QUANTITATIVE ESTIMATE OF CARCINOGENIC RISK FROM ORAL EXPOSURE

Not available.

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__II.C. QUANTITATIVE ESTIMATE OF CARCINOGENIC RISK FROM INHALATION EXPOSURE

__II.C.1. SUMMARY OF RISK ESTIMATES

Inhalation Unit Risk -- 2.3E-1 per (f/mL)

Extrapolation Method -- Additive risk of lung cancer and mesothelioma, using relative risk model for lung cancer and absolute risk model for mesothelioma

Air Concentrations at Specified Risk Levels:

Risk Level	Concentration
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E-4 (1 in 10,000)	4E-4 f/mL
E-5 (1 in 100,000)	4E-5 f/mL
E-6 (1 in 1,000,000)	4E-6 f/mL

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__II.C.2. DOSE-RESPONSE DATA FOR CARCINOGENICITY, INHALATION EXPOSURE

Human Data	Fiber	Reported Average Exposure	% Increase	Reference
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Occupational Group	Type	(fiber-yr/mL)	in Cancer per fiber-yr/mL	
Lung Cancer:				
Textile Products	Predominantly Chrysotile	44	2.8	Dement et al., 1983b
Textile Products	Chrysotile	31	2.5	McDonald et al., 1983a
Textile Products	Chrysotile	200	1.1	Peto, 1980
Textile Products	Chrysotile	51	1.4	McDonald et al., 1983b
Friction Products	Chrysotile	32	0.058	Berry and Newhouse, 1983
Friction Products	Chrysotile	31	0.010	McDonald et al., 1984
Insulation Products	Amosite	67	4.3	Seidman, 1984
Insulation Workers	Mixed (Chrysotile, Crocidolite and Amosite)	300	0.75	Selikoff et al., 1979
Asbestos Products		374	0.49	Henderson and Enterline, 1979
Cement Products		89	0.53	Weill et al., 1979
		112	6.7	Finkelstein, 1983
Mesothelioma:				
Insulation workers	Mixed	375	1.5E-6	Selikoff et al., 1979; Peto et al., 1982
Insulation Products	Amosite	400	1.0E-6	Seidman et al., 1979
Textile Products Manufacturer	Chrysotile	67	3.2E-6	Peto, 1980; Peto et al., 1982
Cement Products	Mixed	108	1.2E-5	Finkelstein, 1983

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II.C.3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (CARCINOGENICITY, INHALATION EXPOSURE)

Risks have been calculated for males and females according to smoking habits for a variety of exposure scenarios (U.S. EPA, 1986). The unit risk value is calculated for the additive combined risk of lung cancer and mesothelioma, and is calculated as a composite value for males and females. The epidemiological data show that cigarette smoking and asbestos exposure interact synergistically for production of lung cancer and do not interact with regard to mesothelioma. The unit risk value is based on risks calculated using U.S. general population cancer rates and mortality patterns without consideration of smoking habits. The risks associated with occupational exposure were adjusted to continuous exposure by applying a

factor of 140 cu.m/50 cu.m based on the assumption of 20 cu.m/day for total ventilation and 10 cu.m/8-hour workday in the occupational setting.

The unit risk is based on fiber counts made by phase contrast microscopy (PCM) and should not be applied directly to measurements made by other analytical techniques. The unit risk uses PCM fibers because the measurements made in the occupational environment use this method. Many environmental monitoring measurements are reported in terms of fiber counts or mass as determined by transmission electron microscopy (TEM). PCM detects only fibers longer than 5 μ m and $>0.4 \mu$ m in diameter, while TEM can detect much smaller fibers. TEM mass units are derived from TEM fiber counts. The correlation between PCM fiber counts and TEM mass measurements is very poor. Six data sets which include both measurements show a conversion between TEM mass and PCM fiber count that range from 5-150 (ug/cu.m)/(f/mL). The geometric mean of these results, 30 (ug/cu.m)/(f/mL), was adopted as a conversion factor (U.S. EPA, 1986), but it should be realized that this value is highly uncertain. Likewise, the correlation between PCM fiber counts and TEM fiber counts is very uncertain and no generally applicable conversion factor exists for these two measurements.

In some cases TEM results are reported as numbers of fibers $<5 \mu$ m long and of fibers longer than 5 μ m. Comparison of PCM fiber counts and TEM counts of fibers $>5 \mu$ m show that the fraction of fibers detected by TEM that are also $>0.4 \mu$ m in diameter (and detectable by PCM) varies from 22-53% (U.S. EPA, 1986).

It should be understood that while TEM can be specific for asbestos, PCM is a nonspecific technique and will measure any fibrous material. Measurements by PCM which are made in conditions where other types of fibers may be present may not be reliable.

In addition to the studies cited above, there were three studies of asbestos workers in mining and milling which showed an increase in lung cancer (McDonald et al., 1980, Nicholson et al., 1979; Rubino et al., 1979). The slope factor calculated from these studies was lower than the other studies, possibly because of a substantially different fiber size distribution, and they were not included in the calculation. The slope factor was calculated by life table methods for lung cancer using a relative risk model, and for mesothelioma using a absolute risk model. The final slope factor for lung cancer was calculated as the weighted geometric mean of estimates from the 11 studies cited in section II.C.2. The final slope factor for mesothelioma is based on the calculated values from the studies of Selikoff et al. (1979), Peto et al. (1982), Seidman et al. (1979), Peto (1980) and Finkelstein (1983) adjusted for the mesothelioma incidence from several additional studies cited previously.

There is some evidence which suggests that the different types of asbestos fibers vary in carcinogenic potency relative to one another and site specificity. It appears, for example, that the risk of mesothelioma is greater with exposure to crocidolite than with amosite or chrysotile exposure alone. This evidence is limited by the lack of information on fiber exposure by mineral type. Other data indicates that differences in fiber size distribution and other process differences may contribute at least as much to the observed variation in risk as does the fiber type itself.

The unit risk should not be used if the air concentration exceeds 4E-2 fibers/ml, since above this concentration the slope factor may differ from that stated.

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II.C.4. DISCUSSION OF CONFIDENCE (CARCINOGENICITY, INHALATION EXPOSURE)

A large number of studies of occupationally-exposed workers have conclusively demonstrated the relationship between asbestos exposure and lung cancer or mesothelioma. These results have been corroborated by animal studies using adequate numbers of animals. The quantitative estimate is limited by uncertainty in the exposure estimates, which results from a lack of data on early exposure in the occupational studies and the uncertainty of conversions between various analytical measurements for asbestos.

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II.D. EPA DOCUMENTATION, REVIEW, AND CONTACTS (CARCINOGENICITY ASSESSMENT)II.D.1. EPA DOCUMENTATION

Source Document -- U.S. EPA, 1985

The 1985 Drinking Water Criteria Document for Asbestos and the 1986 Airborne Asbestos Health Assessment Update have received Agency review.

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II.D.2. REVIEW (CARCINOGENICITY ASSESSMENT)

Agency Work Group Review -- 09/15/87, 12/02/87

Verification Date -- 12/02/87

II.D.3. U.S. EPA CONTACTS (CARCINOGENICITY ASSESSMENT)

Steven P. Bayard / OHEA -- (202)260-5722

Dan Guth / OHEA -- (919)541-4930

III. HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENTS FOR VARIED EXPOSURE DURATIONSIII.A. DRINKING WATER HEALTH ADVISORIES

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4

Not available at this time.

___III.B. OTHER ASSESSMENTS

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4

Content to be determined.

___IV. U.S. EPA REGULATORY ACTIONS

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4
Last Revised -- 01/01/92

EPA risk assessments may be updated as new data are published and as assessment methodologies evolve. Regulatory actions are frequently not updated at the same time. Compare the dates for the regulatory actions in this section with the verification dates for the risk assessments in sections I and II, as this may explain inconsistencies. Also note that some regulatory actions consider factors not related to health risk, such as technical or economic feasibility. Such considerations are indicated for each action. In addition, not all of the regulatory actions listed in this section involve enforceable federal standards. Please direct any questions you may have concerning these regulatory actions to the U.S. EPA contact listed for that particular action. Users are strongly urged to read the background information on each regulatory action in Background Document 4 in Service Code 5.

___IV.A. CLEAN AIR ACT (CAA)

No data available

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___IV.B. SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT (SDWA)

___IV.B.1. MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL GOAL (MCLG) for Drinking Water

Value -- 7E+6 fibers/liter [longer than 10 um] (Final, 1991)

Considers technological or economic feasibility? -- NO

Discussion -- EPA has promulgated a MCLG for asbestos of 7 million fibers/liter (longer than 10 um) based on potential adverse effects (carcinogenicity)

reported in a National Toxicology Program (NTP) bioassay of rats and statements by the EPA Science Advisory Board.

Reference -- 56 FR 3526 (01/30/91)

EPA Contact -- Health and Ecological Criteria Division / OST /
(202) 260-7571 / FTS 260-7571; or Safe Drinking Water Hotline / (800) 426-4791

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___ IV.B.2. MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (MCL) for Drinking Water

Value -- 7E+6 fibers/liter (longer than 10 um) (Final, 1991)

Considers technological or economic feasibility? -- YES

Discussion -- EPA has promulgated a MCL equal to the MCLG of 7 million fibers/liter (longer than 10 um).

Monitoring requirements -- Ground water systems monitored every three years; surface water systems monitored annually; systems out of compliance must begin monitoring quarterly until system is reliably and consistently below MCL.

Analytical methodology -- Transmission electron microscopy (EPA-600/4-83-043, September, 1983).

Best available technology -- Coagulation/filtration; direct and diatomite filtration; corrosion control.

Reference -- 56 FR 3526 (01/30/91)

EPA Contact -- Drinking Water Standards Division / OGWDW /
(202) 260-7575 / FTS 260-7575; or Safe Drinking Water Hotline / (800) 426-4791

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___ IV.B.3. SECONDARY MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (SMCL) for Drinking Water

No data available

<<< Asbestos >>>

___ IV.B.4. REQUIRED MONITORING OF "UNREGULATED" CONTAMINANTS

No data available

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___ IV.C. CLEAN WATER ACT (CWA)

___ IV.C.1. AMBIENT WATER QUALITY CRITERIA, Human Health

Water and Fish Consumption: 3.0E+4 fibers/L

Fish Consumption Only: None

Considers technological or economic feasibility? -- NO

Discussion -- For the maximum protection from the potential carcinogenic properties of this chemical, the ambient water concentration should be zero. However, since zero may not be attainable at this time, the recommended criteria represents a E-6 estimated incremental increase of cancer risk over a lifetime.

Reference -- 45 FR 79318 (11/28/80)

EPA Contact -- Criteria and Standards Division / OWRS
(202)260-1315 / FTS 260-1315

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__IV.C.2. AMBIENT WATER QUALITY CRITERIA, Aquatic Organisms

None available

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__IV.D. FEDERAL INSECTICIDE, FUNGICIDE, AND RODENTICIDE ACT (FIFRA)

No data available

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__IV.E. TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT (TSCA)

__IV.E.1. TSCA, SECTION 6

Status -- Final Rule (1987)

Discussion -- Inspection and response actions under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act.

Reference -- 52 FR 41826 (10/30/87)

EPA Contact -- Chemical Control Division / OTS
(202) 260-3749 / FTS 260-3749

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__IV.F. RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY ACT (RCRA)

No data available

-----<<< Asbestos >>>-----

__IV.G. SUPERFUND (CERCLA)

__IV.G.1. REPORTABLE QUANTITY (RQ) for Release into the Environment

Value (status) -- 1 pound (Final, 1989)

Considers technological or economic feasibility? -- NO

Discussion -- The final RQ for asbestos (friable forms only) is based on potential carcinogenicity. Available data indicate a hazard ranking of high and a weight of evidence classification of Group A, which corresponds to an RQ of 1 pound.

Reference -- 54 FR 33418 (08/14/89)

EPA Contact -- RCRA/Superfund Hotline
(800)424-9346 / (202)260-3000 / FTS 260-3000

_V. SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4

Not available at this time.

_VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4
Last Revised -- 07/01/93

__VI.A. ORAL RFD REFERENCES

None

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__VI.B. INHALATION RFD REFERENCES

None

-----<<< Asbestos >>>-----

__VI.C. CARCINOGENICITY ASSESSMENT REFERENCES

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VI.D. DRINKING WATER HA REFERENCES

None

VII. REVISION HISTORY

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4

Date Section Description

09/26/88	II.	Carcinogen summary on-line
05/01/89	II.	Carcinogen summary noted as pending change
12/01/89	VI.	Bibliography on-line
03/01/91	II.A.1.	Text revised
07/01/91	II.C.3.	Last paragraph units changed from ug/cu.m to fibers/ml
01/01/92	IV.	Regulatory Action section on-line
07/01/93	II.D.1.	EPA Documentation clarified
07/01/93	VI.C.	References alphabetized correctly

SYNONYMS

Substance Name -- Asbestos
CASRN -- 1332-21-4
Last Revised -- 09/26/88

1332-21-4
Asbestos
calidria-asbestos